

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
 REMARKS AT UTAH BEACH D-DAY ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY  
 UTAH BEACH, FRANCE  
 JUNE 6, 1994

SEC. PERRY: (Applause.) Thank you very much, Secretary Brown.

Veterans and other honored guests, 50 years ago today, the bright flame of freedom was rekindled right here on Utah Beach by the American soldiers that we honor today. Seasick, wet and cold, they swam and waded through neck-deep water just to come ashore. In the high winds and the heavy seas that foggy morning, the American forces missed their intended landing site at Utah Beach by more than a mile, but one of the first soldiers on the beach was Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., and with the kind of ingenuity and decisiveness so many Allied soldiers showed that day, Roosevelt said, "We will start the war right here." And they did. (Applause.)

You, the veterans of Utah Beach, fought for a beachhead so that we could begin the final drive to end the Nazi scourge. You fought for those everywhere who cherish freedom, you fought for those who loved you back home, you fought for all of us. You risked your lives so that others may live in peace and without fear. This is the greatest work that God can have us do.

Outside my office at the Pentagon is a painting which depicts a poignant scene of a serviceman with his family in a church. Clearly he is praying before a deployment and a long separation from his family. Below the painting is a verse from Isaiah in which God asks "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And Isaiah replies, "Here am I. Send me." When the call came during World War II, millions of young men -- American men and women answered with Isaiah's words, "Here am I. Send me."

Today I have the privilege of introducing one of those who answered. Lt. General Orwin Talbott was a captain on June 6th, 1944, serving with the 359th Infantry Regiment of the 90th Infantry Division. The 359th had the misfortune of being on the largest Allied ship to be sunk that day, the U.S.S. Susan B. Anthony, but the motto of the 359th is "Carry On." And that's just what they did. They did not make it to Normandy on D-Day, but they did come ashore the next day -- D-Plus-One -- and they performed heroically. Captain Talbott personally led a patrol in taking out an enemy machine gun nest that had kept an entire battalion cut off for 24 hours, and for that act of heroism, he was awarded the Silver Star. For his further bravery and sacrifice in the war in Europe, he also received the Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts. General Talbott also had a distinguished combat record in the Vietnam War, serving in combat longer than any other general.

It is my distinct privilege and honor to introduce to you today General Orwin Talbott. General Talbott, carry on.

(Applause.)

END